

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Alligator River/Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge
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News Release

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Hunters sentenced for the Attempted Take of Black Bear on the Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge



Tree stand from which the men hunted for bear over bait on the refuge.

Photo Credit: Mark Cagle, NCWRC



Caption- Walkway from hunt club land to refuge land by which they gained access.

Photo Credit: Mark Cagle, NCWRC

On Monday, January 28, 2008, United States District Court Judge Terrence Boyle of the Eastern District of North Carolina sentenced Benjamin N. York (59) of Manns Harbor, NC, to a \$10,000.00 fine and five years of probation for the Attempted Take of Black Bear on Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. York's son, Clarence T. York (23), also of Manns Harbor, was given a sentence of a \$1,000.00 fine and three years of probation for the same charges. For the duration of their probations, both men have had their hunting privileges cancelled and have been banned from Pocosin Lakes and Alligator River National Wildlife Refuges.

In early December, 2005, officers with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission discovered walkways, tree stands, and baited sites on Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. Subsequently, Clarence York and another individual were apprehended hunting for bear on the refuge at night. Further investigation determined that Benjamin York, a member of the adjacent hunting club, had coordinated and fully participated in the illegal activities on the refuge.

The third party involved pled guilty and will be sentenced in March.

The case was handled jointly by Refuge Officers at Mattamuskeet and Alligator River National Wildlife Refuges and Conservation Officers with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. and was prosecuted by the Assistant United States Attorney Barbara Kocher.